

directly concerning the welfare of SCs/STs comprise of affirmative action including reservations in Private Sector and legislation for conferring ownership rights in respect of minor forest produce, rights of tribal and other forest dwelling communities over mineral and water sources in the forest areas and other socio-economic and environmental issues.

In pursuance of the basic principles of National Common Minimum Programme for providing education, employment and other developmental programmes for the weaker sections of the society, the Government constituted National Commission for Denotified, Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic "Tribes" on 14th March, 2005. The tenure of the Commission has been extended upto 5.2.2008.

In order to redress the problems of ownership rights and eviction in respect of the tribal communities and other forest dwelling communities dependent on forests, The Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006 has been enacted. The NCMP items pertaining to Minorities i.e. constitution of a National Commission for Religious and Linguistic Minorities, enhancement in the authorized share capital of National Minorities Finance and Development Corporation from Rs. 500 crore to Rs. 650 crore along with an equity support of Rs. 73.65 crore for its effective functioning, introduction of Constitution Amendment Bill for granting constitutional status to the National Commission for Minorities, enhancing the corpus of Maulana Azad Education Foundation from Rs. 70 crore to Rs. 100 crore had been fulfilled before the creation of the separate Ministry of Minority Affairs. On the issue of affirmative action including reservations for SC/ST youth in the Private Sector, the dialogue is continuing with the Apex Industry and Trade Organisations.

Establishment of Evening Courts

*445. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL:
SHRI JAYANTILAL BAROT:

Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have reviewed the present work-load of pending cases in the High Courts during the last two years, State-wise and year-wise;

(b) whether Government have also received any proposals from the State Governments for establishing evening courts to reduce the work-load as well as for providing additional accommodation for the sitting Judges in the High Courts;

(c) if so, the details thereof and by when such courts are likely to be set-up;

(d) whether any funds would be allocated for this purpose during the year 2007-08; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI H.R. BHARDWAJ):

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No State Government has formally written to the Central Government for establishing the Evening Courts. Only after the 'Evening Courts' were launched in the State of Gujarat, the Government of Gujarat requested the Central Government for a special grant of Rs. 5 crore.

Government has received proposals from the State Governments and Union Territories for construction of courts and residential accommodation for judges and judicial officers.

(c) to (e) The matter of introduction of shift system in subordinate courts was discussed, among other things, in the Conference of Chief Ministers and Chief Justices of High Courts held in New Delhi on April 8, 2007. In that Conference all States had welcomed the introduction of shift system in subordinate courts and promised to work in that direction.

It was decided in that Conference that evening/morning courts be set-up, wherever found feasible, and appropriate cases including those involving petty offences be transferred to such courts. Either retired Judicial Officers be re-employed or serving Judicial Officers be given suitable incentive, to preside over these Courts. Government has requested the State Governments to take action on the above-mentioned decision, as also on the other decisions of the Conference, in consultation with their respective High Courts. The Government has also requested the Chief Justices of the High Courts to take action in consultation with the State Governments.

As administration of justice is primarily a State subject, operation of the courts and the time of their sitting is a matter for the State Governments to decide in consultation with their respective High Courts. In view of this, and also since there is no scheme for giving central assistance in this regard no funds have been allocated to the State Governments for establishing evening/morning courts.

A Centrally Sponsored Scheme for development of infrastructure facilities for the judiciary is already under implementation by the Government since 1993-94. The scheme includes construction of court buildings and residential accommodation for judges/judicial officers covering High Courts and Subordinate Courts. The Planning Commission subsequently reviewed this scheme in 2004 and decided that a target driven Action Plan be drawn for optimum utilization of the Plan funds. Accordingly, with a view to optimally use the Plan funds, the Central Government, on the basis of information furnished by the States/Union Territories has prepared a Ten Year Perspective Plan for the construction of 5960 court buildings and 9163 residential accommodation for judges in the various States/Union Territories at an estimated total cost of Rs. 4025 crore. On the basis of this Perspective Plan a proposal for implementing the scheme in the Eleventh Plan period (2007-08 to 2011-12) at a total cost of Rs. 3000 crore with an outlay of Rs. 1550 crore as the central share of assistance (on a 50:50 basis) has been made to the Planning Commission. An amount of Rs. 65 crore has been provided in the Budget Estimates 2007-08.

Central assistance for Tribal Sub-Plan

*446. SHRI KANJIBHAI PATEL: Will the Minister of TRIBAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Special Central Assistance for the Tribal Sub-Plan has been extended to States by the Centre as a 100 per cent grant to fill critical gaps and missing inputs for family-oriented income generating schemes;
- (b) whether any guidelines have been issued in this regard; and
- (c) if so, the details thereof?